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MAIMONIDES ON THE JEWISH CREED.

INTRODUCTION.

THE passage from the tenth, or in some versions eleventh, chapter of the *Mishna Tractate Sanhedrin* on which this essay of Maimonides is a commentary is the "locus classicus" for the dogma question in Judaism. It is noteworthy that the formulation of dogmas in Jewish theological literature had a comparatively late origin. It was not the habit of the Rabbins of the Talmud to dogmatize on conduct and life. Wherever they are found doing so we must seek the reasons in historical causes. The Rabbins were often called upon to defend their own views and expositions of Scripture from the attacks of heretics and apostates. And one can clearly see from the tone and contents of this Mishna of Sanhedrin that it is in substance an answer to several points of contemporary controversy. Such words and phrases as *אפיקורם*, *מין*, *קורא בספרים החצונים*, unmistakably savour of dispute within the Jewish Camp. It is not the purpose of this article, however, to discuss the exact meaning of these terms. In general it may be said that they refer to individual men or sects among the Jews whose theological opinions were both in theory and practice at variance with the accredited views of the day, and called forth their protests. It was not until the time of the rise of the philosophical schools that the Jews withdrew from their hitherto exclusive devotion to the Talmud, and began that philosophical investigation into the fundamental principles of Judaism which gave birth to such a large crop of Jewish dogmatists for several successive centuries. The first dogmatists were the Karaites. The Karaite scholar

Jehuda Hadassi, in the middle of the twelfth century, following previous views among his sect, laid down twelve fundamental articles of the Jewish faith. The first Rabbanite to oppose the doctrines of these predecessors of Jehuda Hadassi, and to show in general the untenable and self-contradictory doctrines of Karaism, was the famous R. Sa'adia Gaon in the tenth century. Sa'adia at the same time subjected Rabbinical Judaism to philosophical tests, and thereby gave his successors the twofold impetus to philosophical studies and the formulation of dogma in Jewish theology. The most eminent successors of Sa'adia were Jehuda Halevi (in his *Ousari*), and Abraham ben David (Rabad) (in his *Emuna Rama*). All three may be said to have been the most distinguished predecessors of Maimonides in this field.

Maimonides went further than his predecessors. The latter did not particularize. Their object consisted in justifying and expounding Judaism in general on philosophical and historical grounds. Maimonides set himself a more practical object. He wanted every Israelite to know exactly what were the things he was expected to believe, so as to be entitled to call himself a Jew, and expect others to do so. With this matter-of-fact motive in his mind he tabulated his views on the Jewish faith, wrote them down in concise language free from ambiguity, and called them the thirteen fundamental Articles. Henceforward Maimonides became the fountain-head of all the dogmatic literature produced by the Jews down to the end of the fifteenth century. Everything in this particular sphere of Jewish theology revolved round his name. "A century had hardly elapsed," says Professor Schechter, "before the Thirteen Articles had become a theme for the poets of the synagogue. And almost every country where Jews lived can show a poem or a prayer founded on these Articles. R. Jacob Molin (1420) of Germany speaks of metrical and rhymed songs in the German language, the burden of which was the Thirteen Articles, and which were

read by the common people with great devotion. The numerous commentaries and homilies written on the same topic would form a small library in themselves" (*Studies in Judaism*, p. 200).

Briefly summarized, the following would seem to be the most noteworthy features of this essay of Maimonides:—

(a) The five different classes of people who erroneously entertain material notions of future Reward and Punishment, basing their ideas on a literal interpretation of Scripture and the Rabbinical writings.

(b) Maimonides' exposition of the Jew's duty to study the Law for its own sake, and not for any ulterior material end. He must seek truth for truth's sake, so as to be enabled to know and practise all the ordinances of the Torah, which is the highest and holiest form of truth.

(c) The author's illustration of the foregoing by the metaphor of the young pupil, who, at the commencement of his studies has to be coaxed by the promise of all kinds of childish gifts, but who, with advancing years, gradually comes to understand that the main object of his studies is not the obtaining of these gifts, but the attainment of knowledge.

(d) Maimonides' theory that Rewards and Punishments are only a concession to the average man's inability to devote himself to the highest pursuit of truth, or to refrain from the path of evil, unless he is in the former case spurred on by the thought and expectation of ulterior material gain, or in the latter case deterred by the threat of physical punishment and loss. After long-continued exercise these material aids to devotion, to uprightness, and to the avoidance of evil-doing become unnecessary. Man becomes spontaneously led on to righteousness. He becomes *עוֹבֵד מֵאֲהָבָה*, serving God for the pure love of God.

(e) Maimonides' further development of this theory. Virtue leads on to virtue; vice inevitably brings vice in its train. God helps the doer of righteousness to higher

and higher flights of righteousness. He fills the way of the wrong-doer with all kinds of obstacles to the Good and the True. In this way the true performer of the precepts of the Torah (which is the highest kind of virtue) attains the highest state of perfection. He reaches the type of the perfect man. When man is thus perfected he does right and eschews wrong, not because he entertains any hopes or fears about Paradise or Gehinnom, or the Days of the Messiah or the World to come, but simply because he is MAN. It is his perfected manhood that of itself leads him on to the complete understanding and performance of the word of God. His soul, after the death of the body, can then enter the state that befits it, viz. the world to come. In the Maimonidean conception, then, the "world to come" is a synonym for the highest-developed state of the soul of the self-perfected man.

(f) Maimonides' view of the Immortality of the Soul. According to him, it is only the intellectual element in the soul that can secure immortality. It follows from this that the simple-minded man, be he ever so virtuous, is excluded from future existence, which will only be the lot of the thinkers whose acquired intelligence, according to the Aristotelians, becomes part of the "active divine intelligence" and thus attains perfection and permanence. This view met with strong opposition—notably by Chisdai Crescas in his *Or Adonoi* who also had much fault to find with Maimonides' Thirteen Articles of Faith.

(g) The interesting fulness with which Maimonides in his seventh Article of Faith speaks of the prophetic faculty possessed by Moses, and the four ways in which the nature of his prophecy differed from and ranked higher than that of all other prophets.

I have based my translation upon the edition (Arabic and Hebrew in parallel columns) of J. Holzer's *Mose Maimuni's Einleitung zu Chelek*, Berlin, 1901.

J. ABELSON.

MAIMONIDES ON THE JEWISH CREED.

All Israel have a portion in the world to come, as it is said (Isa. lx. 21), "And thy people shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever." The following have no portion in the world to come:—

- (a) He who denies the resurrection of the dead¹.
- (b) He who denies the divine origin of the Torah.
- (c) The unbeliever².

Rabbi Akiba would include among these the following two:—

- (a) He who reads heretical books³.
- (b) He who whispers a charm over a wound.

¹ Holzer adopts the reading of *אין חייית המרים*, and not the fuller reading *אין חייית המרים מן חורר*, which is the usual one found in the ordinary editions of the Talmud and adopted by Rashi. According to the longer reading, a man has no portion in the world to come even if he believes in the resurrection but denies that it is alluded to in the Torah. Holzer believes this to be a later addition, because it is not found in the MSS. he used, neither does it occur in the *הלכות השנייה* of the Mishna Torah. He also instances the commentary to Sanhedrin of Meir Halevi, entitled *יר רמה*, where the reading is simply *הנכסר ברחיית המרים*. The shorter reading is also found in the Mishnah of the *Palestinian Talmud*, ed. Lowe. It is interesting to note how much turns upon this point in the elaborate discussion of the matter in Sanhedrin. Rashi ingeniously shows why a man forfeits the world to come even if he admits the fact of the resurrection but refuses to admit the existence of any Biblical hint to the fact.

² The translation "unbeliever" seems the usually accepted one. In the *אגדה* we get *למשיקורם* דע מה שחשיב "Know what answer to give to the unbeliever." Maimonides, however, seems to use it in quite a new sense. He regards it as an Aramaic word from the root *מקר* "to treat as of little importance," "to despise." Hence, says he, its original meaning is, "He who holds the Torah in light esteem." From this, it has come to be applied to him who does not believe in the fundamental principles of the Torah, or to him who despises the old Jewish Sages, or any Jewish Sage or teacher. Maimonides uses the word in this comprehensive significance (see Schechter, *Studies in Judaism*, p. 192).

³ "Heretical books." According to *Sanhedrin* (99 b) these are *ספרי צדוקים*, and the works of Ben Sira. For *ספרי צדוקים* Maimonides has *מנינים*. The low estimate at which he held Ben Sira is astonishing. It was a mere waste of time to read him. His aversion went much further than that of the Talmud, which finds parallels to many of Ben Sira's sayings in many a biblical verse or Rabbinic aphorism, and finally declares *מילי דרשינן* "We may study and give public utterance to the

As it is said, "I will put none of those diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exod. xv. 26).

Abba Saul would include also:

(a) He who utters the letters of the Tetragrammaton.

I have thought fit to speak here concerning many principles belonging to fundamental articles of faith which are of very great importance. Know that the theologians are divided in opinion as to the good which man reaps from the performance of those precepts which God enjoined upon us by the hand of Moses our teacher; and that they also differ among themselves with regard to the evil which will overtake us if we transgress them. Their differences on these questions are very great and in proportion to the differences between their respective intellects. As a consequence, people's opinions have fallen into such great confusion that you can scarcely in any way find any one possessing clear and certain ideas on this subject; neither can you alight upon any portion of it which has been transmitted to any person without abundant error.

One class of thinkers holds that the hoped-for good will be the Garden of Eden, a place where people eat and drink without bodily toil or faintness. Houses of costly stones are there, couches of silk and rivers flowing with wine and perfumed oils, and many other things of this kind. But the evil, they think, will be Gehinnom, a place flaming with fire where bodies are burned, and where human beings suffer varied tortures which it would take too long to describe. This set of thinkers on this principle of faith bring their proofs from many statements of the Sages (peace to them) whose literal interpretation forsooth accords with their contention, or with the greater part of it.

The second class of thinkers firmly believes and imagines that the hoped-for good will be the Days of the Messiah (may he soon appear!). They think that when that time comes all men will be kings for ever. Their bodily frames will be mighty and they will inhabit the whole earth unto eternity. According to their imagination that Messiah will live as long as the Creator (greatly be he praised!), and at that epoch the earth will bring forth garments ready woven, and bread ready baked, and many other impossible things like these. But the evil will consist in the fact that mankind will not exist at that epoch and will be unworthy to witness it. They also bring proofs for their statements from many remarks of

useful remarks found in it" (i.e. in Ben Sira). This is a further proof of Maimonides' dislike of poetry.

the Sages, and from scriptural texts which in their outward interpretation agree with their claim, or a portion of it.

The third class is of opinion that the desired good will consist in the resurrection of the dead. This implies that man will live after his death; that in the company of his family and relatives he will once again eat and drink, and never more die. But the evil will mean that he will not again come to life. These thinkers also point for proof to the remarks of the Sages, and to certain verses¹ of the Bible, whose literal sense tallies with their view.

The fourth class is of opinion that the good which we shall reap from obedience to the Law will consist in the repose of the body and the attainment in this world of all worldly wishes, as, for example, the fertility of lands, abundant wealth, abundance of children, long life, bodily health and security, enjoying the sway of a king, and prevailing over the oppressor. The evil which will overtake us when we act in opposition [to the Torah] will mean the reversal of the afore-mentioned conditions, a state of things such as we now have in this the time of our exile. The holders of this view point for proof to all the texts of Scripture which speak of blessings and curses and other matters, and to the whole body of narratives existing in Holy Writ.

The fifth set of thinkers is the largest. Its members combine all the afore-gone opinions, and declare the objects hoped for are the coming of the Messiah, the resurrection of the dead, their entry into the Garden of Eden, their eating and drinking and living in health there so long as heaven and earth endure.

But with regard to this strange point—I mean the world to come—you will find very few who will in any way take the matter to heart, or meditate on it, or adopt this or that principle, or ask to what these names² (the world to come) refer, whether the last-mentioned view constitutes the object to be aimed after, or whether one of the preceding opinions rightly expresses it. And you will rarely come across any one who will distinguish between the end desired and the means which lead to it. You will not by any means find any one to ask about this, or speak of it. What, however, all people ask, both the common folk and the educated classes is this:—In what condition will the dead rise to life, naked or clothed? Will they stand up in those very garments in which they were buried,

¹ עוֹלָם. The Arabicized plural form of the Hebrew word עוֹלָם. Maimonides often uses these Arabic forms.

² עוֹלָמוֹת. As Holzer points out, this form of the word עוֹלָם (a name) is not to be found in the Arabic dictionaries. He thinks it an incorrect form of the plural עוֹלָמוֹת (names).

in their embroideries and brocades, and beautiful needlework, or in a robe that will merely cover the body? And when the Messiah comes will rich and poor be alike, or will the distinctions between weak and strong still exist—and many similar questions from time to time.

Now, O reader, understand the following simile of mine¹, and then you will make it your aim to grasp my meaning throughout. Figure to yourself a child young in years brought to a teacher to be instructed by him in the Torah. This is the greatest good he can derive in respect of his attainment of perfection. But the child, on account of the fewness of his years and the weakness of his intellect, does not grasp the measure of that benefit, or the extent to which it leads him towards the attainment of perfection. The teacher (who is nearer perfection than the pupil) must therefore necessarily stimulate him to learning by means of things in which he delights by reason of his youth. Thus he says to him, "Read, and I shall give you nuts or figs², or a bit of sugar." The child yields to this. He learns diligently, not indeed for the sake of the knowledge itself, as he does not know the importance of it, but merely to obtain that particular dainty (the eating of that dainty being more relished by him than study, and regarded as an unquestionably greater boon). And consequently he considers learning as a labour and a weariness to which he gives himself up in order by its means to gain his desired object, which consists of a nut, or a piece of sugar. When he grows older and his intelligence strengthens, he thinks lightly of the trifle in which he formerly found joy and begins to desire something new. He longs for this newly-chosen object of his, and his teacher now says to him, "Read, and I shall buy you pretty shoes, or a coat of this kind!" Accordingly he again exerts himself to learn, not for the sake of the knowledge, but to acquire that coat; for the garment ranks higher in his estimation than the learning and constitutes the final aim of his studies. When, however, he reaches a higher stage of mental perfection, this prize also ranks little with him, and he sets his heart upon something of greater moment. So that when his teacher bids him "learn this פרשה 'section,' or that פרק 'chapter,' and I shall give you a dinar or two," he learns with zest in order to

¹ Bachya makes use of the same figure of speech in the section שער חובות הלבבות of his החשובות.

² The Arabic has the plural "we shall give," whereas the Hebrew keeps to the singular, as it refers to the teacher. A similar usage occurs a few lines later, where we get the Arabic נשקו "and we shall buy," with the Hebrew singular נאקו.

obtain that money which to him is of more value than the learning, seeing that it constitutes the final aim of his studies. When, further, he reaches the age of greater discretion, this prize also loses its worth for him. He recognizes its paltry nature and sets his heart upon something more desirable. His teacher then says to him, "Learn, in order that you may become a Rabbi, or a Judge; the people will honour you, and rise before you; they will be obedient to your authority, and your name will be great, both in life and after death, as in the case of so and so." The pupil throws himself into ardent study, striving all the time to reach this stage of eminence. His aim is that of obtaining the honour of men, their esteem and commendation.

But all these methods are blameworthy. For in truth it is incumbent upon man, considering the weakness of the human mind, to make his aim in his acquisition of learning something which is extraneous to learning. And he should say of anything which is studied for the sake of gaining reward, "Of a truth this is a silly business." This is what the Sages meant when they used the expression *שלא לשמה* "not for its own sake." They meant to tell us that men obey the laws of the Torah, perform its precepts, and study and strive, not to obtain the thing itself, but for a further object. The Sages prohibited this to us in their remark¹, "Make not of the Torah a crown wherewith to aggrandize thyself, nor a spade wherewith to dig." They allude to that which I have made clear to you, viz. not to make the be-all and end-all of learning either the glorification of men or the acquisition of wealth. Also not to adopt the Law of God as the means of a livelihood, but to make the goal of one's study the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake. Similarly, the aim of one's study of truth ought to be the knowing of truth. The laws of the Torah are truth, and the purport of their study is obedience to them. The perfect man must not say, "If I perform these virtues and refrain from these vices which God forbade, what reward shall I receive?" For this would resemble the case of the lad who says, "If I read, what present will be given me?" and he receives the reply that he will get such and such a thing. This is only because when we notice the poverty of his intelligence, which fails to grasp this stage of things and aims at getting something other than what ought to be its real aim, we answer him according to his folly. "Answer a fool according to his folly²." The Sages warned us against this also, viz. against a man making the attainment of some worldly object the end of his service to God, and his obedience to his precepts. And this is the meaning of the dictum

¹ *Ethics of the Fathers*, IV, 7.

² Prov. xxvi. 5.

of that distinguished and perfect man who understood the fundamental truth of things—Antigonus of Socho—"Be not like servants who minister to their master upon the condition of receiving a reward; but be like servants who minister to their master without the condition of receiving a reward¹." They really meant to tell us by this that a man should believe in truth for truth's sake². And this is the sense they wished to convey by their expression עוֹבֵר מֵאַהֲבָה "serving from motives of love," and by their comment on the phrase בְּמִצְוֹתָיו הֵפִיץ מֵאוֹר³ "that delighteth in his commandments." R. Eliezer said בְּמִצְוֹתָיו "in his commandments," and *not* בִּשְׂכָר מִצְוֹתָיו = "in the reward for performance of his commandments." How strong a proof we have here of the truth of our argument, and how decisive! It is a clear confirmation of the text we have previously quoted. And we possess a stronger proof still in their remark in Sifre: שְׂמָא תֵּאֵמַר הֲרִינִי לְמֹד תּוֹרָה בְּשִׁבִּיל שְׂאֵהִיָּה עֲשִׂיר שְׂבִיל שְׂאֵקֵרָא רַבִּי שְׂאֵקֵבֵל שְׂכָר בְּעוֹלָם הָבָא תְּלִמּוֹד לֹמַר לְאַהֲבָה⁴ אַתָּה בְּשִׁבִּיל שְׂאֵקֵרָא רַבִּי שְׂאֵקֵבֵל שְׂכָר בְּעוֹלָם הָבָא תְּלִמּוֹד לֹמַר לְאַהֲבָה אַתָּה Peradventure thou mayest say, Verily I will learn the Torah in order that I may become rich or that I may be called 'Rabbi,' or that I may receive a recompense in the future world. Therefore does Holy Writ say 'to love the Lord thy God.' Let everything that thou doest be done out of pure love for him."

The significance of this matter is now clear, and it is evident that what we have here stated is really the aim of the Torah, and the basis of the theological principles laid down by the Sages. No one can be blind to it except the imbecile boor who has fallen a prey to the whisperings of inane thoughts and defective imaginings. It was in this that the pre-eminence of Abraham our father consisted. He was עוֹבֵר מֵאַהֲבָה "a server from motives of pure love⁵." And it is in this direction that effort should be put forward.

But our Sages knew how difficult a thing this was and that not every one could act up to it. They knew that even the man who reached it would not at once accord with it and think it a true article of faith. For man only does those actions which will either bring him advantage or ward off loss. All other action he holds vain and worthless. Accordingly, how could it be said to one who is learned in the Law—"Do these things, but do them not out of fear of God's

¹ *Ethics of the Fathers*, I, 3.

² Maimonides develops the idea in his *Mishna Torah* הלכות השו"ב, X, 1, 2, 4, 5.

³ *Aboda Zara*, 19 a, and Ps. cxii. 1.

⁴ Deut. xi. 13.

⁵ *Sota*, 31 a, "מזה ירא אלקים האמור בנבדם מאהבה וכו'."

punishment, nor out of hope for his reward"? This would be exceedingly hard, because it is not every one that comprehends truth, and becomes like Abraham our father. Therefore, in order that the common folk might be established in their convictions, the Sages permitted them to perform meritorious actions with the hope of reward, and to avoid the doing of evil out of fear of punishment. They encourage them to these conceptions and their opinions become firmly rooted, until eventually the intelligent among them come to comprehend and know what truth is and what is the most perfect mode of conduct. It is exactly the way in which we deal with the lad in his studies, as we have explained in our foregoing simile. Antigonus of Socho was blamed by them for the particular exposition he gave to the multitude and they applied to him the words¹, "Oh, wise men, be cautious of your words," as we shall explain in our remarks on "The ethics of the Fathers." The people at large are not one jot the worse off through their performance of the precepts of the Torah by reason of their fear of punishment and expectation of reward; for they are in a state of imperfection. On the contrary, they are by this means drawn to cultivate the necessary habits and training for acting in loyalty to the Torah. They bring themselves over to an understanding of truth, and become עובדים מאהבה "servers out of pure love." And this is what the Sages meant by their remark²: לעולם יעסוק אדם בתורה אפילו שלא לשמה, שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה "Man should ever engage himself in the Torah, even though it be not for the Torah's sake. Action regardless of the Torah's sake will lead on to action regardless of it."

We must now come to the point which it is necessary for you to know, viz., that men are divided into three different classes in respect of their notions regarding the words of the Sages. The first class is, as far as I have seen, the largest in point of their numbers and of the numbers of their compositions; and it is of them that I have heard most. The members of this class adopt the words of the Sages literally, and give no kind of interpretation whatsoever. With them all impossibilities are necessary occurrences. This is owing to their being ignorant of science and far away from knowledge. They do not possess that perfection which would spur them on of their own accord, neither have they found any means for rousing their attention. They think that in all their emphatic and precise remarks the Sages only wished to convey the ideas which they themselves comprehend, and that they intended them to be taken in their literalness. And this, in spite of the fact that in their literal significance some of the

¹ *Ethics of the Fathers*, I, 11.

² *Pesachim*, 50 b.

words of the Sages would savour of absurdity. And so much so that were they manifested to the ordinary folk (leave alone the educated) in their literalness, they would reflect upon them with amazement and would exclaim: "How can there exist any one who would seriously think in this way and regard such statements as the correct view of things, much less approve of them." This class of men are poor, and their folly deserves our pity. For in their own opinions they are honouring the Sages, whereas in reality they are all the time degrading them to the lowest depths—and this all unconsciously. As God lives, it is this class of thinkers that robs our religion of its beauties, darkens its brilliance, and makes the Law of God convey meanings quite contrary to those it was intended to convey. For God says in the perfect book of his revelation: "For this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people¹." But this class strings together the literal interpretations of the remarks of the Sages, so that when the nations hear them they exclaim, "Surely this small nation is a foolish and untutored people." And as for the many things that are done by those preachers² who explain to the people what they do not themselves understand, would that their ignorance caused them to be silent, even as Job says, "Would that ye were silent, and this would be unto you for wisdom³." Or would that they were to say, "We do not know what the wise men intended by this assertion, nor how it is to be interpreted." But, of a truth, they imagine that they do understand, and devote themselves to inculcating among the people that which they themselves think, and not what the Sages said. And they expound sermons before the leaders of the people on such themes as The Talmud Treatise "Berachoth" and the "10th chap. of Mishna Sanhedrin," &c., in their literal senses word by word.

The second class of reasoners is also numerous. They see and hear the words of the Sages and accept them in their literal significations, thinking that the Sages meant nothing but what the literal interpretation indicates. They consequently apply themselves to showing the weakness of the Rabbinical statements, their objectionable character,

¹ Deut. iv. 6.

² It is not at all certain to whom Maimonides is here alluding as *אנשי הדורשנים*. He is evidently referring to contemporary preachers. Holzer suggests that it is a blow directed against the contemporary French school of exegetists who opposed Maimonides' rationalist method of interpretation with great bitterness.

³ Job xiii. 5.

and to calumniate that which is free from reproach. They make sport of the words of the Sages from time to time, and imagine themselves more intellectually gifted and possessed of more penetrating minds, whereas they (peace to them!) are deceived, short-sighted, ignorant of all existing things, and consequently unable to comprehend anything. The majority of those who fall into these beliefs consists of those who pretend to a knowledge of medicine, and of those who rant about the decrees of the stars. For these are men who in their own estimation are sages and philosophers. But how far removed are they from humanity when placed side by side with the true philosophers! They are more stupid than the first class (of which we have spoken), and more steeped in folly! They are an accursed class, because they put themselves in opposition to men of great worth, whose learning is manifest to scholars. If only they trained themselves in knowledge so as to know how necessary it is to use the appropriate speech in theology and in like subjects which are common to both the uneducated and the cultured, and to understand also the practical portion of philosophy, it would then be clear to them whether the Sages were really men of wisdom or no, and the significance of their assertions would be comprehensible to them.

The third class of thinkers is (as God liveth!) so very small in numbers that one would only call it a class in the sense that the sun is termed a species (although it is a single object). They are the men who accept as established facts the greatness of the Sages and the excellence of their thoughts, as found in the generality of their remarks, where each word points a very true theme. Although the number of these discourses is small and scattered about in different portions of their writings, they nevertheless indicate the perfection of their authors and the fact that they attained truth. The members of this class are convinced also of the impossibility of the impossible and the necessary existence of what must exist. For they know that they (peace to them!) would not talk absurdities to one another. And they are convinced beyond doubt that their words have both an outer and an inner meaning, and that in all that they said of things impossible their discourses were in the form of riddle and parable. For this was the method of the great savants, and for this reason did the wisest of men open his book with the words¹, להבין משל, "To understand parable and saying, the words of the wise and their riddles." Those who study philology know that חידה is a mode of speech whose meaning is inward not outward, as in the verse² אחודה נא לכם חידה "I will now put

¹ Prov. i. 6.

² Judges xiv. 12.

forth a riddle unto you." For the theme of the speech of men of learning consists entirely in matters of the highest import. But they are put in the form of riddle and parable. And how can we disapprove of their literary productions being in the manner of proverb and simile of a lowly and popular kind, seeing that the wisest of men did the same ברוח הקודש "by holy inspiration," viz. Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, the Song of Songs, and part of Ecclesiastes? How can we disapprove of the method of placing interpretations on the words of the Sages, and drawing them out of their literalness to adjust them to reason and make them accord with truth and the books of Scripture, seeing that the Sages themselves place their interpretations on the words of the text and by bringing them out of their literal meaning present them as parable? And that this is true can be seen from what we find in their interpretation of the verse (2 Sam. xxiii. 20), "He slew two lion-like men of Moab," &c.¹ All of which they regard as allegory. And similarly the verse (2 Sam. xxiii. 20), "he slew the lion in the midst of the pit," they treat as allegory. And likewise (2 Sam. xxiii. 15)², "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!" and all that follows they interpret figuratively. And so it is with the whole Book of Job, of which one of the Rabbins says, משל היה "it is an allegory," but he does not explain what meaning the allegory is intended to convey. And so again in the case of the dry bones of Ezekiel, which one Rabbi declares to have been allegorically meant⁴. And we could quote many similar instances.

If, O reader, you belong to one of the first-named classes, do not pay any attention to any of my remarks on this subject, because not a word of it will suit you. On the contrary, it will harm you and you will dislike it. For how can food of light weight and temperate character suit a person accustomed to partaking of bad and gross fare? It would really injure him, and he would loathe it. Do you not see what was said concerning the manna by those who had grown accustomed to eating onions and garlic, and fish? ונפשנו קצה בלחם הקלוקל "and our soul loatheth this light bread." If, however, you are of those who constitute the third class, and when you come across any of the Sages' remarks which reason rejects, you

¹ *Berachoth*, 18 b.

² *Baba Kama*, 60 b.

³ *Baba Bathra*, 15 a. The Hebrew צדק is hardly as accurate as the Arabic بغيره. The latter means "a certain one of them," the former signifies "some of them," which is not correct, because it is an individual that holds this view about היה מל היה. The same applies to the next statement about the חזי חזקיה, which is the individual view of R. Jehuda.

⁴ *Sanhedrin*, 92 b.

⁵ *Num.* xxi. 5.

pause and learn that it is a dark saying and an allegory. And if you then pass the night wrapped up in thought and dwelling in anxious reflection over its interpretation, mentally striving to find the truth and the correct point of view, as it is said, **למצוא דברי הפץ וכחוב יושר**, **דברי אמת**¹ "To find out acceptable words, and the writing of uprightness, even words of truth," you will then consider this discourse of mine, and it will profit you, if God wills it.

I shall now begin to treat of the subject which I originally intended. Know that just as a blind man can form no idea of colours, nor a deaf man comprehend sounds, nor a eunuch feel the desire for sexual intercourse, so the bodies cannot comprehend the delights of the soul. And even as fish do not know the element² fire because they exist ever in its opposite, so are the delights of the world of spirit unknown to this world of flesh. Indeed, we have no pleasure in any way except what is bodily, and what the senses can comprehend of eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse. Whatever is outside these is non-existent to us. We do not discern it, neither do we grasp it at first thought, but only after deep penetration. And truly this must necessarily be the case. For we live in a material world and the only pleasure we can comprehend must be material. But the delights of the spirit are everlasting and uninterrupted, and there is no resemblance in any possible way between spiritual and bodily enjoyments. We are not sanctioned either by the Torah or by the divine philosophers to assert that the angels, the stars, and the spheres enjoy no delights. In truth they have exceeding great delight in respect of what they comprehend of the Creator (glorified be he!). This to them is an everlasting felicity without a break. They have no bodily pleasures, neither do they comprehend them, because they have no senses like ours, enabling them to have our sense experiences. And likewise will it be with us too. When after death the worthy from among us will reach that exalted stage he will experience no bodily pleasures, neither will he have any wish for them, any more than would a king of sovereign power wish to divest himself of his imperial sway and return to his boyhood's games with a ball in the street, although at one time he would without doubt have set a higher worth upon a game with a ball than on kingly dominion, such being the case only when his years were few and he was totally ignorant of the real significance of either pursuit, just as we to-day rank the delights of the body above those of the soul.

And when you will give your consideration to the subject of these two pleasures, you will discover the meanness of the one and the high worth of the other. And this applies even to this world. For we find

¹ Eccles. xii. 10.

² **אֵשׁ** = Greek στοιχεῖον = element.

in the case of the majority of men that they all burden their souls and bodies with the greatest possible labour and fatigue in order to attain distinction or a great position in men's esteem. This pleasure is not that of eating or drinking. Similarly, many a man prefers the obtaining of revenge over his enemies to many of the pleasures of the body. And many a man, again, shuns the greatest among all physical delights out of fear that it should bring him shame and the reproach of men, or because he seeks a good reputation. If such then is our condition in this world of matter, how much more will it be our case in the world of the spirit, viz. the world to come, where our souls will attain to a knowledge of the Creator as do the higher bodies, or more. This pleasure cannot be divided into parts. It cannot be described, neither can anything be found to compare with it. It is as the prophet exclaimed, when admiring its great glories¹: "How great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the children of men." And in a similar sense the Sages remarked²: "In the world to come there will be no eating and no drinking, no washing and no anointing and no marriage; but only the righteous sitting with crowns on their heads enjoying the splendour of the Shechinah." By their remark, "their crowns on their heads," is meant the preservation of the soul in the intellectual sphere³, and the merging of the two into one as has been described by the illustrious philosophers in ways whose exposition would take too long here. By their remark, "enjoying the splendour of the Shechinah," is meant that those souls will reap bliss in what they comprehend of the Creator, just as the Holy Chayoth and the other ranks of angels enjoy felicity in what they understand of his existence. And so the felicity and the final goal consist in reaching to this exalted company and attaining to this high pitch⁴. The continuation of the soul, as we have stated, is endless, like the continuation of the Creator (praised be he!) who is the cause of its continuation in that it comprehends him, as is

¹ Ps. xxxi. 19.

² *Berachoth*, 17 a.

³ Cp. *Moreh Nebuchim*, I, 41, where Maimonides distinguishes three kinds of soul: (1) "that which constitutes animal life in general; (2) that which constitutes human life in particular; (3) that part of man's individuality which exists independently of his body—i. e. the soul" (Dr. Friedlander's note to his translation). This third kind of soul is the intellect, and it is the only one that is immortal. According to Maimonides it would seem that it is only the souls of men of exemplary intellectual and moral standing that are immortal.

⁴ The Hebrew literally means "to be included in this glory" (לִיְהוֹיָהּ, בכבוד הוֹיָהּ). But this is too free a translation of the Arabic *wa-l-huḍūr fī hūdhā*, which literally means "attaining to (or 'arriving at') this limit."

explained in elementary philosophy. This is the great bliss with which no bliss is comparable and to which no pleasure can be likened. For how can the enduring and infinite be likened to a thing which has a break and an end? This is the meaning of the scriptural phrase¹ למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים "In order that it may be well with thee and that thou mayest prolong thy days"; for which we possess the traditional interpretation, which is²: למען ייטב לך לעולם שכלו טוב "In order that it may be well with thee in the world which is all good"; והארכת ימים לעולם שכלו ארוך "and that thou mayest prolong thy days in a world which is of unending length."

The consummate evil (of punishment) consists in the cutting off of the soul, its perishing and its failure to attain durability. This is the meaning of כרת "cutting off," mentioned in the Torah. The meaning of כרת is the cutting off of the soul, as the Torah manifestly declares³: הכרת תכרת הנפש ההיא "That soul shall surely be cut off." And the Sages remarked (peace to them!): הכרת "cutting off in this world⁴," תכרת "cutting off in the world to come." Scripture also contains the verse⁵, והיתה נפש אדוני צרורה בצרור החיים "And the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bond of life." All those who devote themselves to bodily pleasures, rejecting truth and choosing falsehood, are cut off from participation in that exalted state of things and remain as detached matter merely. And in this connexion the prophet in his remark⁶, וולתוך יעשה למחכה לו, "The eye hath not seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him," has made it clear that the world to come cannot be comprehended by the bodily senses. The Sages, in interpretation of this phrase, said⁷: כל הנביאים כלם לא נתנבאו אלא לימות המשיח אבל העולם הבא עין לא ראתה אל" וולתוך "All prophets prophesy only concerning the days of the Messiah, but the world to come no eye hath seen save God."

As regards the promises and threats alluded to in the Torah, their interpretation is that which I shall now tell you. It says to you, "If you obey these precepts, I will help you to a further obedience of them and perfection in the performance of them. And I shall remove all hindrances from you." For it is impossible for man to do the service of God when sick or hungry or thirsty or in trouble, and this is why the Torah promises the removal of all these disabilities and gives man also the promise of health and quietude until

¹ Deut. xxii. 7.

² *Kiduschin*, 39 b, and *Chulin*, 142 a.

³ Num. xv. 31.

⁴ *Sanhedrin*, 64 b and 90 b.

⁵ 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Maimonides quotes the same verse in *Moreh Nebuchim*, I, 41, where he speaks of the intellectual soul which lives on after death of the body.

⁶ Isa. lxiv. 3.

⁷ *Berachoth*, 34 b.

such a time as he shall have attained perfection of knowledge and be worthy of the life of the world to come. The final aim of the Torah is not that the earth should be fertile, that people should live long, and that bodies should be healthy. It simply helps us to the performance of its precepts by holding out the promise of all these things. Similarly, if men transgress, their punishment will be that all these hindrances will come into being, rendering them powerless to do righteousness, as we read: "לֹא עָבַדְתָּ אֹתָהּ" ¹, "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness . . . Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee. . . ." If you give this matter more than ordinary consideration, you will find it to be equivalent to being told, "If you carry out a portion of these laws with love and diligence, we shall help you to a performance of all of them by removing from you all difficulties and obstacles; but if you abandon any of them out of disdain we shall bring hindrances into your path that will prevent you from doing any of them, so that you will gain neither perfection nor eternity." This is what is meant by the assertion of the Rabbins ²: עֲבָרָה עֲבָרָה שָׂכָר מִצְוָה מִצְוָה וְשָׂכָר עֲבָרָה "The recompense of a precept is a precept, and the recompense of transgression, transgression."

As for the Garden of Eden ³, it is a fertile spot on the earth's sphere rich in streams and fruits. God will of a certainty disclose it to man one day, and will show him the path leading to it. Man will reap enjoyment within it, and there may possibly be found therein plants of a very extraordinary sort, great in usefulness and rich in pleasure-giving properties, in addition to those which are renowned with us. All this is not impossible nor far-fetched. On the contrary, it is quite near possibility, and would be so even if the Torah failed to allude to it. How much more is it the case seeing that it has a clear and conspicuous place in the Torah!

Gehinnom is an expression for the suffering that will befall the wicked. The nature of this suffering is not expounded in the Talmud. One authority there states that the sun will draw near them [the wicked] and burn them ⁴. He gets his proof from the verse כִּי

¹ Deut. xxviii. 47.

² *Ethics of the Fathers*, IV, 2.

³ It is noteworthy that Maimonides places גֵּי הַיָּמִין and גֵּי הַשְּׂמִינִי on this side of the grave, and gives them no connexion whatsoever with the life hereafter. He holds the view consistently with the Talmudic dictum, "In the world to come there will be no eating and no drinking," &c. But it seems in direct opposition to the average Jewish view expressed in our liturgy in such terms as וְהָיָה מִיָּמֵינוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן and to prevailing Jewish conceptions about גֵּי הַיָּמִין, which is always included in the paraphernalia of the hereafter, and not of the mundane existence.

⁴ *Aboda Zara*, 3 b, and *Nedarim*, 8 b.

¹ "הנה היום בא בוער כתנור" "For behold the day cometh, burning as an oven." Another asserts that a strange heat will arise in their bodies, and consume them. He derives proof for this from the phrase ² "רוחכם אש תאכלכם" "Your breath as fire shall devour you."

The Resurrection of the Dead is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Law of Moses. He who does not believe in this has no religion, and no bond with the Jewish faith. But it is the reward of the righteous only, as is shown by the statement in *Bereshith Rabba*, גבורת נשמים לצדיקים ולרשעים וחהיית המתים לצדיקים בלבד, "The great benefits of the rain are for both the righteous and the wicked, but the resurrection of the dead applies to the righteous only." And forsooth how shall the evil-doers live after death, seeing that they were dead even in life, as the Sages said, רשעים אפילו "The wicked ³ בחייהם קרויים מתים צדיקים אפילו במיתתם קרויים חיים" are called dead even during their lives, but the good are called living even after their death." And know that man is bound to die and become dissolved into his component parts.

The days of the Messiah will be the time when the kingdom will return to Israel who will return to the Holy Land ⁴. The king who will then reign will have Zion as the capital of his realm. His name will be great and fill the earth to its uttermost bounds ⁵. It will be a greater name than that of king Solomon and mightier. The nations will make peace with him, and lands will obey him by reason of his great rectitude and the wonders that will come to light by his means. Any one that rises up against him God will destroy and make him fall into his hand. All verses of scripture testify to his prosperity and our prosperity in him. So far as existing things are concerned there will be no difference whatever between now and then, except that Israel will possess the kingdom. And this is the sense of the Rabbins' statement, אין בין העולם הזה לימות המשיח, "There is no difference between this world ⁶ and the Days of the Messiah except the subjugation of the kingdoms alone." In his days there will be both the strong and the weak in their relations to others. But verily in those days the gaining of their livelihood will be so very easy to men that they will do the lightest possible labour and reap great benefit. It is this that is

¹ Malachi iii. 19.

² Isa. xxxiii. 12.

³ *Berachoth*, 18 a.

⁴ ארץ is used here to denote Palestine. Cf. Prof. Bacher's note, *J.Q.R.*, XVIII, 564.

⁵ The Arabic is *יכלא אפאק אלארץ* which is freely translated by the Hebrew חכרו יהיה מלא הגוים. The translator may possibly have been anxious to imitate the verse (Gen. xlviii. 19) חרש יהיה מלא הגוים.

⁶ *Berachoth*, 34 b, *Sabbath*, 63 a.

meant by the remark of the Rabbins, להוציא גלוסקאות, עתידה ארץ ישראל "The land of Israel will one day produce cakes ready baked, and garments of fine silk." For when one finds a thing easily and without labour, people are in the habit of saying, "So and So found bread ready baked, and a meal ready cooked." And you have a proof of this in the scriptural statement, ובני נכר אכריכם וכורמיכם² "And the sons of the stranger shall be your husbandmen, and the tillers of your vineyards." This is an indication that seed-time and harvest will exist there [in the land of Israel at the time of the Messiah]. And it was for this reason that the particular Rabbi who made the afore-mentioned assertion blamed his pupil for not understanding the drift of his remarks, and thinking them to be intended literally. And consequently the reply he gave him was commensurate with the latter's power of comprehension; but it was not the real answer. And the proof that he did not intend it for the truth is seen in the fact that he corroborates his attitude by quoting the verse אל תען כסיל כאולתו³ "Answer not a fool according to his folly." The great benefits that will accrue to us at that epoch will consist in our enjoying rest from the work of subjugating the kingdoms of wickedness, a work which prevents us from the full performance of righteous action. Knowledge will increase, as it is said, כי מלאה הארץ דעה אתה⁴ "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God." Discords⁵ and wars will cease, as it is said, לא ישאו⁶ "Nation shall no more lift up sword against nation." Great perfection will appertain to him that lives in those days, and he will be elevated⁷ through it to the חיי העולם הבא "the life of the world to come." But the Messiah will die, and his son and son's son will reign in his stead. God has clearly declared his death in the words, לא יבה ולא ירוץ עד ישים בארץ משפט⁸ "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." His kingdom will endure a very long time and the lives of men will be long

¹ Sabbath, 30 b.

² Isa. lxi. 5.

³ Prov. xxvi. 4.

⁴ Isa. xi. 9.

⁵ The Hebrew renders the Arabic *ואלחריו* by the one word *המלחמה* "wars," which seems barely sufficient. The Arabic *סורה* is most probably here in the sense of civil war. This goes well with *מלחמה* which is mostly used for political war. The cessation of both will be a prominent feature in the Messianic time.

⁶ Micah iv. 3.

⁷ The Arabic *يرقى* = to be elevated [to holy orders]. This is barely done justice to by the Hebrew *נובה*. Besides, the Arabic is third person singular, whereas the Hebrew is first person plural.

⁸ Isa. xlii. 4.

also, because longevity is a consequence of the removal of sorrows and cares. Let not the fact of the duration of his kingdom for thousands of years seem strange to you, for the Sages have said that when a number of good things come together it is not an easy thing for them to separate again. The days of the Messiah are not ardently longed for on account of the plentiful vegetation, and the riches which they will bring in their train, nor in order that we may ride on horses, nor that we may drink to the accompaniment of various kinds of musical instruments, as is thought by those people who are confused in their ideas on such things. No! the prophets and saints wished and ardently desired [the days of the Messiah] because it implies the coming together of the virtuous, with choice deeds of goodness and knowledge, and the justice of the King¹, the greatness of his wisdom and his nearness to his Creator, as it is said: "The Lord said unto me, thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee²." And because it implies obedience to all the Laws of Moses, without ennui or disquietude³ or constraint, as it is promised⁴ in the words, ולא ילמדו עוד איש את רעהו כי כלם ידעו אותי⁵ ונחתו תורתם בלבם⁶ והסירותם רעתם⁷ "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them." "And I will take away the stony heart from your flesh." And there are many more similar verses on like themes.

It is under conditions like these that one will obtain a firm hold upon the world to come. The final goal is the attaining to the world to come, and it is to it that the effort must be directed. And it is in this sense that the particular sage, gifted with truth looked towards the final goal and omitting what was extraneous to it,

¹ The Hebrew here has וירב ישרו "the greatness of his rectitude," which is not found in the Arabic version.

² Ps. ii. 7. It is interesting to note the smoothness with which Maimonides glides over this passage which is the *pièce de résistance* of Christological interpreters. He takes "sonship" in the sense of kinship, nearness, i. e. in the moral and spiritual senses. The Messiah is the "son" of God in so far as he is, humanly speaking, as near God as possible in the possession of the highest of virtues.

³ The Arabic قلق = disquietude, agitation. I cannot find in it a correspondence of meaning with the Hebrew עצלה which = sloth, laziness.

⁴ The Hebrew has the ordinary expression כמו שנאמר "as it is said."

⁵ Jer. xxxi. 34.

⁶ Jer. xxxi. 33. This is a portion of the verse, but incorrectly quoted. It is נחתו את תורתם בקרבם.

⁷ Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

declared **הבא לעולם** **כל ישראל יש להם חלק** "All Israel have a portion in the world to come." Although the "world to come" constitutes the final object of desire, it is not meet that he who wishes to be **עובד מאהבה** should work to attain "the world to come," as we have explained in the foregoing remarks. Rather must he serve God in the way that I shall prescribe. This is as follows: when he firmly believes that the Torah contains knowledge which reached the prophets from before God, who through it taught them that virtuous deeds are of such and such a kind and ignoble deeds of such and such a kind, it is obligatory for him, in so far as he is a man of well balanced temperament, to bring forth meritorious deeds and shun vice. When he acts like this, the significance of man has in him reached the point of perfection and he is divided off from the brute. And when a man arrives at the point of being perfect he belongs to that order¹ of man whom no obstacle hinders from making the intellectual element in his soul live on after death. This is "the world to come" as we have made clear, and herein lies the significance of the Psalmist's remark, **אל תהיו כסוס כפדר** **אל תהיו כמלך** **אין הבין במתן ורסן עריו לבלום**² "Be ye not as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle . . ." This means that what restrains beasts from doing harm is something external, as a bridle or a bit. But not so with man. His restraining agency lies in his very self, I mean in his human framework. When the latter becomes perfected it is exactly that which keeps him away from those things which perfection withholds from him and which are termed vices; and it is that which spurs him on to what will bring about perfection in him, viz. virtue.

These are the ideas which I have acquired from the generality of the Sages' remarks upon this exalted and most prominent theme. I hope to compose a work in which I shall collect all the maxims that are found in the Talmud and other works. I shall throw light upon them and give them an interpretation suiting the truth. And I shall bring proof for all of it from the Sages' own words also. I shall make clear which of their statements have to be taken literally and which are figures of speech; and also which of them were only incidents of sleep but spoken of in express terms as if they happened during the waking state. In that work I shall explain to you many principles of faith, and in these explanations I will make clear all the things of which I have given you a few rudi-

¹ The meaning varies according as you read **פזל** or **פזל**. Holzer in the Arabic text before me adopts the latter reading, but the Hebrew version seems to be a translation of the former.

² Ps. xxxii. 9.

mentary facts in this treatise of mine. You can compare them with others. Let no one blame me for the freedom with which I have used certain expressions and assertions in this my treatise, and which provokes the criticism of the learned. For I have enlarged freely upon this section in order to give understanding to him who has previously had no training in this exalted subject which is not comprehended by every man.

The expression אפיקורם.—This is an Aramaic word. It signifies disdain of and contempt for the Torah or the traditional¹ explanation of the Torah. For this reason they give this name to those who do not believe in the fundamental principles of the Torah, or to those who make light of the Sages or any disciple of the Sages, or harm them².

The expression ספרים החיצונים "Heretical Books." They called these³ ספרי מינים "Books of the Minim." The books of Ben Sira belong to this class. He was a man who composed books of idle talk on the subjects of the art of physiognomy. They contain no knowledge and serve no useful purpose, but are a mere wasting of time in vain amusement. And of such a kind are e.g. those books existing among the Arabs dealing with chronologies, legends of kings, the genealogies of the Arabs, the books of songs⁴, and similar books, which

¹ "The traditional explanation of the Torah." This seems to be the meaning of חמלה אלשריה—from the verb חמל = to carry. חמלה = a carrying from one place to another. Such was the case with the oral law which was handed down to successive generations in all climes. The Hebrew renders the words חמלה אלשריה by למדיה "its learners, students"—possibly because it is they who carry about and disseminate its teachings.

² אכזריה. This seems to be the X. form of אזי = to injure, damage. The Hebrew has רבו = his master. This is obviously another reading. Or it may be that the word המבזה "he who despises" (which Holzer repudiates) should stand, and then the Arabic word would be equivalent to רבו המבזה "he who injures him," viz. his master.

³ *Sanhedrin*, 99 b. As to the exact significance of the *Minim* see Travers Herford, *Christianity in the Talmud*.

⁴ ספר שירים "Books of songs." It is surprising that Maimonides dismisses these with contempt although they occupy a great and distinguished place on the Parnassus of Arabic literature. The Mu'allaqât, the Mufad-daliyyât, the Jamharat Ash'ar al-'Arab, the Hamasa of Abu Tammam are all great collections of Bedouin poems of the greatest importance in Arabic literature, both from a poetical and historical point of view. Then there is the great ספר שירים (Book of Songs), published at the Bûlâq printing-press in twenty volumes, to which Brûnnow has added a twenty-first from MSS. discovered in European libraries. In his *History of Arabic Literature* Prof. Clément Huart says "This huge literary

contain no knowledge and are of no practical use, but mere waste of time.

The expression והלוחש על המכה "He who whispers a charm over a wound" has no portion in the world to come. But this is only the case if there is any spitting¹, because this would be indecent before God.

The expression וההונה את השם באותיותיו "He who pronounces the letters of the Tetragrammaton." This means that he utters the letters ה ו ה י, which constitute the שם המפורש² lit. the proper name, i.e. the name exclusively applied to one Being. It is used repeatedly in the Mishnah and Gemara Yoma. See Commentary of Shemtob on chapter 62 of *Moreh Nebuchim*. They also mentioned other things besides these, the doer of which will have no portion in the world to come. Thus they said, "He that publicly puts the face of his neighbour to the blush shall have no portion in the world to come³." "He that calls his neighbour by his nicknames⁴." "He that takes honour to himself in the disgrace of his neighbour⁵." Although these may seem small offences to the ordinary thinker, actions of this kind will only emanate from a soul defective, without perfection, and not fitted for the life of the world to come.

What I have to mention now (and this is the most correct place for alluding to it) is that the roots of our Law and its fundamental principles are thirteen.

The first Principle of Faith.

The existence of the Creator (praised be he!), i. e. that there is an existent Being invested with the highest perfection of existence.

compilation is our most valuable source as to everything regarding the circumstances amidst which the poets of the first centuries of Arab literature lived their lives and composed their works." That any one should say of all this that it is a mere "waste of time" is really extraordinary. Maimonides evidently loathed poetry.

¹ בריקקה. The Arabic verb رוקى=to use magic or incantation, and has therefore a striking resemblance in the lettering to this Hebrew word and it fits in well with the theme. But there is no such grammatical form of the Arabic word and the resemblance is merely accidental.

² For the full discussion of the שם המפורש, see *Moreh Nebuchim*, chap. 61-64. Dr. Friedländer has an interesting note there explaining the literal meaning of the phrase שם המפורש.

³ *Baba Mezia*, 58 b.

⁴ *Baba Mezia*, 58 b. The wording, however, is not as here, but המכנה שם רע לחבירו.

⁵ *Baba Mezia*, 58 b.

He is the cause of the existence of all existent things. In him they exist and from him emanates their continued existence. If we could suppose¹ the removal of his existence then the existence of all things would entirely cease and there would not be left any independent existence whatsoever². But if on the other hand we could suppose the removal of all existent things but he, his existence (blessed be he!) would not cease to be, neither would it suffer any diminution. For he (exalted be he!) is self-sufficient, and his existence needs the aid of no existence outside his. Whatsoever is outside him, the intelligences (i.e. the angels) and the bodies of the spheres, and things below these³, all of them need him for their existence. This is the first cardinal doctrine of faith, which is indicated by the commandment, "I am the Lord thy God" **אני ה' אלהיך**⁴.

The second Principle of Faith.

The Unity of God. This implies that this cause of all is one; not one of a genus nor of a species, and not as one human being who is a compound divisible into many unities; not a unity like the ordinary material body which is one in number but takes on endless divisions and parts. But he, the exalted one, is a unity in the sense that there is no unity like his in any way. This is the second cardinal doctrine of faith which is indicated by the assertion, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is one" **שמע ישראל** "ה' אחד" **ה' אל"ה**⁵.

The third Principle of Faith.

The removal of materiality from God. This signifies that this unity is not a body nor the power of a body, nor can the accidents of bodies overtake him, as e.g. motion and rest, whether in the essential or accidental sense. It was for this reason that the Sages (peace to them!) denied to him both cohesion and separation of

¹ To accord with the Arabic **קדמה** we should expect **על הלב** and not the third pers. sing. **יעלה**.

The Arabic **מהקל בנודה** "that which is independent, absolute, in its existence," is rather loosely and inaccurately rendered by **נמצא שיהיה** **מציאות**.

³ The Hebrew has **ומה שיש ברוכס** "and what is inside them," which is not represented in the Arabic, unless the translator understood **דן** (**دَوْن**) to contain this meaning among the many others which it possesses in Arabic. I cannot, however, find this meaning indicated in the dictionaries.

⁴ Exod. xx. 2.

⁵ Deut. vi. 4.

parts, when they remarked ¹ עפוי ולא עורף ולא עמידה ולא ישיבה ולא, i. e. "no sitting and no standing, no division ² (עורף), and no cohesion ³" (עפוי) [according to the verse פלשתים ונעפו בכתף, i. e. they will push them with the shoulder in order to join themselves to them]. The prophet again said ⁴, "And unto whom will ye liken God," &c., "and ⁵ unto whom will ye liken me that I may be like, saith the Holy One." If God were a body he would be like a body. Wherever in the scriptures God is spoken of with the attributes of material bodies, like motion, standing, sitting, speaking, and such like, all these are figures of speech, as the Sages said, דברה תורה כלשון בני אדם ⁶ "The Torah speaks in the language of men." People ⁷ have said a great deal on this point. This third fundamental article of faith is indicated by the scriptural expression, ⁸ כי לא ראיתם כל תמונה "for ye have seen no likeness," i. e. you have not comprehended him as one who possesses a likeness, for, as we have remarked, he is not a body nor a bodily power.

The fourth Principle of Faith.

The priority of God. This means that the unity whom we have described is first in the absolute sense. No existent thing outside him is primary in relation to him. The proofs of this in the Scriptures are numerous. This fourth principle is indicated by the phrase ⁹ מעונה אל "קדם" "The eternal God is a refuge."

The fifth Principle of Faith.

That it is he (be he exalted!) who must be worshipped, aggrandized, and made known by his greatness and the obedience shown to him. This must not be done to any existing beings lower than he—not to the angels nor the spheres nor the elements, or the things which are compounded from them. For these are all fashioned in accordance with the works they are intended to perform. They have

¹ Hagiga, 15 a.

² ערף. The Arabic عرף means "to divide." In Hebrew we get this meaning נפרדו (Exod. xiii. 13) "and thou shall break its neck," i. e. separate, divide the head from the trunk. In Hosea x. 2 we get the phrase יערף מונחותם "he shall break down their altars," i. e. take them to pieces, separate stone from stone.

³ This translation is in accord with the Targum of Jonathan which renders the verse Isa. xi. 14 ויחברון כתף דר.

⁴ Isa. xl. 18.

⁵ Isa. xl. 25.

⁶ Berachoth, 31 b.

⁷ For the Arabic أئمة "people" the Hebrew has החכמים "the sages." The reason for this change is not clear.

⁸ Deut. iv. 15.

⁹ Deut. xxxiii. 27.

no judgement or free-will, but only a love for him (be he exalted!). Let us adopt no mediators to enable ourselves to draw near unto God, but let the thoughts be directed to him, and turned away from whatsoever is below him. This fifth principle is a prohibition of idolatry. The greater part of the Torah is taken up with the prohibition of idol-worship.

The sixth Principle of Faith.

Prophecy. This implies that it should be known that among this human species there exist persons of very intellectual natures and possessing much perfection. Their souls are pre-disposed for receiving the form of the intellect. Then this human intellect joins itself with the active intellect, and an exalted emanation¹ is shed upon them. These are the prophets. This is prophecy, and this is its meaning. The complete elucidation of this principle of faith would be very long, and it is not our purpose to bring proofs for every principle or to elucidate the means of comprehending them, for this affair includes the totality of the sciences. We shall give them a passing mention only. The verses of the Torah which testify concerning the prophecy of prophets are many.

The seventh Principle of Faith.

The prophecy of Moses our Teacher. This implies that we must believe that he was the father of all the prophets before him and that those who came after him were all beneath him in rank. He (Moses) was chosen by God from the whole human kind. He comprehended more of God than any man in the past or future ever comprehended or will comprehend. And we must believe that he reached a state of exaltedness beyond the sphere of humanity, so that he attained to the angelic rank and became included in the

¹ The Arabic *فأف* literally signifies "to flow" (of water, blood, &c.), and is usually represented in Hebrew by *שפע* which has an exactly similar significance. This whole subject is thoroughly discussed in the *Moreh*, II, 12. Everything that happens in the world is influenced by the *מין* of the Divine Creator. It is this that is shed upon the prophets, enabling them to prophesy. *נאמר שהעולם נהחדש משפע הבורא ושהוא המשפיע עליו כל מה* "It is said that the universe renews itself by the emanation of the Creator, and that it is he who is the cause of the emanation of everything that renews itself in it. Similarly it is said that he causes his wisdom to emanate to the prophets." Maimonides instances the usage of this idea in the prophetic books of the Bible by quoting Jeremiah xvii. 13 *אמרו עזבו מקור מים חיים* "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters."

order of the angels. There was no veil which he did not pierce. No material hindrance stood in his way, and no defect whether small or great mingled itself with him. The imaginative and sensual powers of his perceptive faculty were stripped from him. His desiderative power was stilled and he remained pure intellect only. It is in this significance that it is remarked of him that he discoursed with God without any angelic intermediary.

We had it in our mind to explain this strange subject here and to unlock the secrets firmly enclosed in scriptural verses; to expound the meaning of **פה אל פה** "mouth to mouth"; and the whole of this verse and other things belonging to the same theme. But I see that this theme is very subtle; it would need abundant development and introductions and illustrations. The existence of angels would first have to be made clear and the distinction between their ranks and that of the Creator. The soul would have to be explained and all its powers. The circle would then grow wider until we should have to say a word about the forms which the prophets attribute to the Creator and the angels. The **שעור קומה** and its meaning would consequently have to enter into our survey. And even if this one subject were shortened into the narrowest compass it could not receive sufficient justice, even in a hundred pages. For this reason I shall leave it to its place, either in the book of the interpretation of the **דרשות**¹ "discourses," which I have promised, or in the book on prophecy which I have begun, or in the book which I shall compose for explaining these fundamental articles of faith.

I shall now come back to the purpose of this seventh principle and say that the prophecy of Moses differs from that of all other prophets in four respects:—

(1) Whosoever the prophet, God spake not with him but by an intermediary. But Moses had no intermediary, as it is said, **פה אל פה אדבר בו**² "mouth to mouth did I speak with him."

(2) Every other prophet received his inspiration only when in a state of sleep, as it is asserted in various parts of scripture, **בחלום חזיון לילה**³ "in a dream of the night," and many other phrases with similar significance; or in the day when deep sleep has fallen upon the prophet and his condition is that in which there is a removal of his sense-perceptions, and his mind is a blank like a sleep. This state is styled **מחזה** and **מראה**, and is alluded to in the expression

¹ This promised work was left undone by Maimonides. His son Abraham wittily alluded to the fact in the words **וירא משה מנשה אליו** "And Moses was afraid to draw near to it" (a slight alteration of Exod. xxxiv. 30).

² Num. xii. 8.

³ Gen. xx. 3.

⁴ Job xxxiii. 15.

במראות אלהים = "in visions of God." But to Moses the word came in the day-time when "he was standing between the two cherubim," as God had promised him in the words ¹ שם ודברתי אתך שם "And there I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee." And God further said, במראה אליו אתודע בחלום, פה אל פה אדבר בו ² "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth . . ."

(3) When the inspiration comes to the prophet, although it is in a vision and by means of an angel, his strength becomes enfeebled, his physique becomes deranged. And very great terror falls upon him so that he is almost broken through it, as is illustrated in the case of Daniel. When Gabriel speaks to him in a vision, Daniel says: ³ ולא נשאר בי כח והודי נהפך עלי למשחית ולא עצרתי כח "And there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption and I retained no strength." And he further says: ⁴ ואני הייתי נרדם על פני ופני ארצה "Then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face towards the ground." And further: ⁵ במראה נהפכו צירי עלי "By the vision my sorrows are turned upon me." But not so with Moses. The word came unto him and no confusion in any way overtook him, as we are told in the verse ⁶ ודבר ה' אל משה פנים אל פנים כאשר ידבר איש אל רעהו "And the Lord spake unto Moses face unto face as a man speaketh unto his neighbour." This means that just as no man feels disquieted when his neighbour talks with him, so he (peace to him!) had no fright at the discourse of God, although it was face to face; this being the case by reason of the strong bond uniting him with the intellect, as we have described.

(4) To all the prophets the inspiration came not at their own choice but by the will of God. The prophet at times waits a number of years without an inspiration reaching him. And it is sometimes asked of the prophet that he should communicate a message [he has received], but the prophet waits some days or months before doing so or does not make it known at all. We

¹ Exod. xxv. 22.

² Num. xii. 6-8.

³ Dan. x. 8.

⁴ Dan. x. 9.

⁵ Dan. x. 16.

⁶ Exod. xxxiii. 11. For the full discussion of all the meanings of פנים, see *Moreh*, I, 37. He there explains פנים בפנים as שמיעה הקול מבחוץ אמצעיות as פנים בפנים "the perception of the Divine voice without the intervention of an angel."

have seen cases where the prophet prepares himself¹ by enlivening his soul and purifying his spirit², as did Elisha in the incident when he declared³ **ועתה קחו לי מנגן** "But now bring me a minstrel!" and then the inspiration came to him. He does not necessarily receive the inspiration at the time that he is ready for it. But Moses our teacher was able to say at whatsoever time he wished, **עמדו ואשמעה מה יצוה ה' לכם** "Stand, and I shall hear what God shall command concerning you." It is again said, **דבר אל אהרן** "Speak unto Aaron thy brother that he come not at all times into the sanctuary;" with reference to which verse the Talmud remarks "that only Aaron is **יבא**, but Moses is not **יבא**. **בכל יבוא**. The prohibition ("That he come not at all times") applies only to Aaron. But Moses may enter the sanctuary at all times.

The eighth Principle of Faith.

That the Torah has been revealed from heaven. This implies our belief that the whole of this Torah found in our hands this day is the Torah that was handed down by Moses and that it is all of divine origin. By this I mean that the whole of the Torah came unto him from before God in a manner which is metaphorically called "speaking"; but the real nature of that communication is unknown to everybody except to Moses (peace to him!) to whom it came. In handing down the Torah, Moses was like a scribe writing from dictation the whole of it, its chronicles, its narratives, and its precepts. It is in this sense that he is termed **מחוקק** = "lawgiver." And there is no difference between verses like **ובני הם כוש ומצרים ופוט** "And the sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim, Phut and Canaan," or **ואשתו מהטבאל בת מטרת** "And his wife's name was Mehatabel, the daughter of Matred," or **ותמנע היתה פילגש** "And Timna was concubine," and verses like **אנכי ה' אלהיך** "I am the

¹ The Arabic word **פאשר** is only found in the sense of "Creator," which cannot possibly fit in here. Holzer suggests that it may be meant by Maimonides for **משרה**, which means "religious sentiment," "natural disposition." As an instance of the necessity for previous self-preparation on the part of a prophet one would have thought that Maimonides would have mentioned the case of the severe ordeal of Isaiah (chap. vi) which is far more striking than the instance he quotes in the life of Elisha.

² 2 Kings iii. 15.

³ The Arabic **يستمع** does not seem to be rendered in the Hebrew version.

⁴ Num. ix. 8.

⁵ Lev. xvi. 2.

⁶ Gen. x. 6.

⁷ Gen. xxxvi. 39.

⁸ Gen. xxxvi. 12.

⁹ Exod. xx. 2.

Lord thy God," and שמע ישראל¹ "Hear, O Israel." They are all equally of divine origin and all belong to the תורה ה' תמימה טהורה "The Law of God which is perfect, pure, holy, and true." In the opinion of the Rabbins, Manasseh was the most renegade and the greatest of all infidels because he thought that in the Torah there were a kernel and a husk, and that these histories and anecdotes have no value and emanate from Moses. This is the significance of the expression אין תורה מן השמים "The Torah does not come from heaven," which, say the Rabbins², is the remark of one who believes that all the Torah is of divine origin save a certain verse which (says he) was not spoken by God but by Moses himself. And of such a one the verse says³ בזה⁴ "For he hath despised the word of the Lord." May God be exalted far above and beyond the speech of the infidels! For truly in every letter of the Torah there reside wise maxims and admirable truths for him to whom God has given understanding. You cannot grasp the uttermost bounds of its wisdom. "It is larger in measure than the earth, and wider than the sea⁴." Man has but to follow in the footsteps of the anointed one of the God of Jacob, who prayed נפלאות מתורתך⁵ "Open my eyes and I shall behold wonderful things from thy Law." The interpretation of traditional law is in like manner of divine origin. And that which we know to-day of the nature of Succah, Lulab, Shofar, Fringes, and Phylacteries (סוכה, לולב, שופר, ציצית) is essentially the same as that which God commanded Moses, and which the latter told us. In the success of his mission Moses realized the mission of a נאמן⁶ (a faithful servant of God). The text in which the eighth principle of faith is indicated is: בואת⁷ "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind."

The ninth Principle of Faith.

The abrogation of the Torah. This implies that this Law of Moses will not be abrogated and that no other law will come from before God. Nothing is to be added to it nor taken away from it, neither in the written nor oral law, as it is said לא תוסיף עליו ולא תגרע ממנו⁸ "Thou shalt not add to it nor diminish from it." In the beginning

¹ Deut. vi. 4.

² Sanhedrin, 99 a.

³ Num. xv. 31.

⁴ Job xi. 9.

⁵ Ps. cxix. 18.

⁶ Num. xii. 7.

⁷ Num. xvi. 28.

⁸ Deut. xiii. 1.

of this treatise we have already explained that which requires explanation in this principle of faith.

The tenth Principle of Faith.

That he, the exalted one, knows the works of men and is not unmindful of them. Not as they thought who said, ¹ "את הארץ עזב ה'" "The Lord hath forsaken the earth," but as he declared who exclaimed ² "גדל העצה ורב העליליה אשר עיניך פקוחות על כל דרכי בני אדם" "Great in counsel, and mighty in work; for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men." It is further said, ³ "וירא ה'" "And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." And again, ⁴ "זעקת סדום ועמורה כי רבה" "the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great." This indicates our tenth principle of faith.

The eleventh Principle of Faith.

That he, the exalted one, rewards him who obeys the commands of the Torah, and punishes him who transgresses its prohibitions. That God's greatest reward to man is **עולם הבא** "the future world," and that his strongest punishment is **כרת** "cutting off." We have already said sufficient upon this theme. The scriptural verses in which the principle is pointed out are:—**אם תשא חטאתם** ⁵ **ואם אין מחני נא מספרך** "Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin —; but if not, blot me out of thy book." And God replied to him, **כי** ⁶ **אשר חטא לי אמחנו מספרי** "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." This is a proof of what the obedient and the rebellious each obtain ⁷. God rewards the one and punishes the other.

The twelfth Principle of Faith.

The days of the Messiah. This involves the belief and firm faith in his coming, and that we should not find him slow in coming. ⁸ **לוי** "Though he tarry, wait for him." No date

¹ Ezek. viii. 12; ix. 9.

² Jer. xxxii. 19.

³ Gen. vi. 5.

⁴ Gen. xviii. 20.

⁵ Exod. xxxii. 32.

⁶ Exod. xxxii. 33.

⁷ For the Arabic **חזל** (II. infin. of **חזל**) the Hebrew has **שירר** "that he knows." The word **חזל** signifies "to obtain," either in the material sense or figuratively in the sense of grasping or comprehending some scientific idea. The Hebrew gives the second signification. I have translated, however, in its first meaning.

⁸ Hab. ii. 3.

must be fixed for his appearance¹, neither may the scriptures be interpreted with the view of deducing the time of his coming. The Sages said, ² תפח רוחו של מושבי קצין "A plague on those who calculate periods" (for Messiah's appearance). We must have faith in him, honouring and loving him, and praying for him according to the degree of importance with which he is spoken of by every prophet, from Moses unto Malachi. He that has any doubt about him or holds his authority in light esteem imputes falsehood to the Torah, which clearly promises his coming in ³ פרישת בלעם "the chapter of Balaam," and in ⁴ אתם נצבים "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God." From the general nature of this principle of faith we gather that there will be no king of Israel but from David and the descendants of Solomon exclusively. Every one who disputes the authority of this family denies God and the words of his prophets.

The thirteenth Principle of Faith.

The resurrection of the dead⁵. We have already explained this.

¹ Many computations were made by Jews in the middle ages with regard to the time of the Messiah's appearance. It was one such computation by a Jewish enthusiast in Yemen (about 1172) that caused Maimonides to compose his famous איגרת חסין in which he says: "It is wrong to calculate the Messianic period, as the Yemen enthusiast thinks he has succeeded in doing; for it can never be exactly determined, it having been purposely concealed, as a deep secret, by the prophets" (Graetz, *History of the Jews*, English transl., vol. III, p. 478).

² *Sanhedrin*, 97 b.

³ Num. xxiii-xxiv. In the איגרת חסין Maimonides derives the exact date of the coming of the Messiah from the verse כעת יאמר ליעקב וכו' (Num. xxiii. 23). This is most strangely inconsistent with the advice given in this essay, and in the *Iggereth Teman*, against calculating the date of the Messiah's appearance. (See Dr. Friedlander's Introduction to Translation of *Moreh*, vol. I.)

⁴ Deut. xxx. 1-10.

⁵ From the briefness with which Maimonides dismisses this thirteenth article concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, it has been inferred by many that he was really opposed to classing it among the fundamental dogmas of Judaism, and only did so as an unwilling concession to the current orthodox views of his day. His *Moreh Nebuchim* is quite silent on the point. Maimonides was attacked on this very question by his opponents during his lifetime. They complained that whereas he had made an exhaustive examination of the question of immortality, he had passed over the doctrine of Resurrection with little notice. Maimonides vindicated himself by writing his famous מאמר דחיית הדתים in

When all these principles of faith are in the safe keeping of man, and his conviction of them is well established, he then enters **בכלל ישראל** "into the general body of Israel," and it is incumbent upon us to love him, to care for him, and to do for him all that God commanded us to do for one another in the way of affection and brotherly sympathy. And this, even though he were to be guilty of every transgression possible, by reason of the power of desire or the mastery of the base natural passions. He will receive punishment according to the measure of his perversity, but he will have a portion in the world to come, even though he be of the **פושעי ישראל** "transgressors in Israel." When, however, a man breaks away from any one of these fundamental principles of belief, then of him is it said that **יצא מן הכלל** "he has gone out of the general body of Israel," and **כפר בעקר** "he denies the root-truths of Judaism." And he is then termed **מין**, and **אפיקורס**, and **קוצץ בנטיעות**¹ "hewer of the small plants," and it is obligatory upon us to hate him and cause him to perish, and it is concerning him that the scriptural verse says:—**הלא משנאיך ה' אשנא**² "Shall I not hate those who hate thee, O Lord?"

I find that I have prolonged my remarks very much and have departed from the main thread of my thesis. But I have been obliged to do so because I consider it advantageous to religious belief. For I have brought together for you many useful things scattered about in many collections of books. Therefore find happiness in them, and repeat this my discourse many times over, and ponder it well. And if your power of desire make you wish that you grasped its purport after going through it once, or even after reading it ten times, verily God knows that you have been made to desire an absurd thing. And so do not go through it hurriedly, for, of

Arabic in the year 1101. He says there that he "firmly believes in the Resurrection as a miracle whose possibility is granted with the assumption of a temporal Creation" (Graetz, English transl., vol. III, p. 503). Maimonides seems to have looked on the Resurrection as a secondary consideration.

¹ **קוצץ בנטיעות**. The phrase is taken from the famous Midrash commencing **עקיבה ורבי אבויא** **אישע בן אבויא** **אישע בן עזאי** **אישע בן זומא** **אישע בן אבויא** **אישע בן עקיבה**. It is Elisha ben Abuya who is **קוצץ בנטיעות** "the hewer of the small plants," because he used to enter synagogues and schools in which children were receiving religious instruction, and would endeavour to lead them away from the paths of the Torah by telling them his heretical views (**היה אומר** **עליהן מילא ומסתחמין**). See *Midrash Rabba Shir Ha-Shirim*, chapter **הביאני** **אין דורשין** **המלך חררי**; also *Talmud Jerushalmi* on Chagiga in Perek **המלך חררי**.

² Ps. cxxxix. 21.

a truth, I have not composed it in random fashion but after reflection and conviction and the attentive examination of correct and incorrect views; and after getting to know what things out of all of them it is incumbent upon us to believe, and bringing to my assistance arguments and proofs for every individual section of the subject. I shall now ask God's assistance to what is right and true, and return to the main theme of the chapter (X of *Sanhedrin*).